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I'm Afloat

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The British Militiaman.

Come sound the drum and fire the gun
To serve the Queen be willing,
And you must mind your P's and Q's,
When you go out a drilling;
Your pay is thirteen-pence a day,
The articles I'll mention,
If you get shot with an iron pot,
Perhaps you'll get a pension.

Then off she goes—turn out your toes,
Militiamen fight aisy,
"Drill him well," cries Sergeant Bell,
"Heads up," says Corporal Casey.

You Cobbler Sneeze, turn in your knees,
And wear your coat the right way,
Or by a Court Martial you'll be tried,
"Flare up," says General Pipeclay,
Your faces clean, be sharp and keen,
And see what stands before ye,
Strike up your flutes, and black your boots,
And fight for Bull and glory.

Then off she goes, &c.

The cobbler leaves his awl and last.
The Tanner leaves his dog-skin,
The Baker leaves his half-penny rolls,
The Tailor leaves his bodkin,
The Butcher leaves his greasy block,
The Italian leaves his monkey,
And Colonel Gee, gave one pound three,
For a scarlet belt and a donkey.

Then off she goes, &c.

Great bouncing Nan, says my man Sam,
Did all he could to dish her,
He stole his father's coat and then
Volunteer'd in the Militia:
While charming Jane went down the lane,
And was confined so clever,
With a little son, marked with a gun,
A Bayonet, Cap, and Feather.

Then off she goes, &c.

Stand at ease, toes out, in knees,
Attention in a clap trap,
Says Corporal Gill, that Cobbler Will,
Has lost the string of his knapsack,
Quick march—before—right, left, behind,
Prime and load so steady,
When war alarms, boys shoulder arms,
Present and then make ready.

Then off she goes, &c.

"That little snip," says Sergeant Tripp,
Does like a foreign hen lie low,
He wears a coat 'twould fit Ben Caunt,
And trousers made for Bendigo,
He is not fit to have a kit,
Or travel to the Nile then,
To-morrow night we'll make him fight
The king of the Sandwich Islands.

Then off she goes, &c.

Eight thousand lads with hearts so glad,
They want, in good condition,
To go to Sydenham for to guard
The great New Exhibition.
And then to dance to Spain and France,
And to the Cape were care be's,
To fire away at the Hottentots,
And knock down all the pear trees.

Then off she goes, &c.

Now Private Plum beat up the drum,
And call the lads together,
See how they run with life and gun,
And noble cap and feather;
We have them all both great and small
To fight for wealth and riches,
On iron pegs—on wooden legs,
With neither shirt nor breeches.

Then off she goes, &c.



I'm Afloat.

I'm afloat, I'm afloat on the fierce rolling tide,
The ocean's my home and my bark is my bride;
Up, up with my flag, let it wave o'er the sea;
I'm afloat, I'm afloat, and the rover is free,
I fear not the monarch, I heed not the law:
I've a compass to steer by, a dagger to draw,
And ne'er as a coward or slave will I kneel,
While my gun carry shot, or my belt bears a steel.
Quick! quick trim her sails! let her sheets kiss the wind,
And I'll warrant we'll soon leave the seagulls behind,
Up, up with my flag let it wave o'er the sea!
I'm afloat, I'm afloat, and the rover is free!

The night gathers o'er us, the thunder is heard:
What matter? our vessel skims on like a bird!
What to her is the dash of the storm ridden main?
She has braved it before, and will brave it again,
The fire-gleaming flashes around us may fall—
They may strike, they may cleave, but they cannot appal,
With lightning above us, and darkness below
Through the wild waste of waters right onward we go,
Hurrah! my brave comrades, ye may drink, ye may sleep,
The storm-fiend is hush'd, we're alone on the deep,
Our flag of defiance still waves o'er the sea,
I'm afloat, I'm afloat and the rover is free!

WALKER, PRINTER, DURHAM.